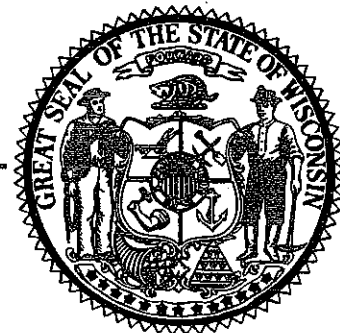


FRED A. RISSE

President Wisconsin State Senate

February 8, 2010



Senator Lena Taylor, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary, Corrections, Insurance, Campaign Finance Reform, and Housing
122 North, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear ^{Lena,}~~Senator Taylor,~~

Thank you Chairperson Taylor for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 473, which I have authored. Rep. David Cullen is the lead Assembly sponsor of this measure. I also appreciate your co-authorship of this measure Senator Taylor.

The purpose of this bipartisan bill is to implement the 2008 Amendments to the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act in Wisconsin. The Act was promulgated by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws which, for 118 years, has provided states with non-partisan legislation that brings clarity and stability to critical areas of the law so that they are consistent from state to state. Representative Cullen and I are both Uniform Law Commissioners.

This bill updates the existing Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) which, since its inception has set out rules and priorities for the exercise of jurisdiction by courts in this state in actions to establish or enforce spousal or child support obligations, to modify child support obligations, or to determine paternity, when the parties reside in different states or when orders have been issued in different states.

The original Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) has been adopted by every state. One of the most important accomplishments of UIFSA is the establishment of bedrock jurisdictional rules under which a tribunal in one state has the ability to issue or modify a support order. Once issued, other states must enforce and not modify the order. Further, if more than one state tribunal issues an order pertaining to the same beneficiary, one of those would become the enforceable, controlling order.

UIFSA also provides clearer guidance to state support agencies with regard to the redirection of support payments to an obligee's current state of residence, clarifies that the local law of a responding state applies with regard to enforcement procedures and remedies, and fixes the duration of a child support order to that required under the law of the state originally issuing the order (i.e., a second state cannot modify an order to extend to age 21 if the issuing state limits support to age 18).

While SB-473 primarily reorganizes provisions in current law and makes various nonsubstantive terminology or technical changes and minor substantive changes, it does address more recent developments. In November 2007, the United States signed the Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance. This Convention contains numerous provisions that establish uniform procedures for the processing of international child support cases. The 2008 UIFSA amendments serve as the implementing legislation for the Convention throughout the states.

By setting out such rules and priorities, UIFSA aims to eliminate the possibility that conflicting support orders might be issued or enforced by courts in different states. And enactment of the amendments to UIFSA will improve the enforcement of American child support orders abroad and will ensure that children residing in the United States will receive the financial support due from parents, wherever the parents reside.

I appreciate your willingness to schedule this measure for a public hearing and I encourage the committee to look favorably upon this important legislation.

Most sincerely,



FRED A. RISSE
President
Wisconsin State Senate

FAR:tet

Cc: Senate Committee on Judiciary, Corrections, Insurance, Campaign Finance Reform, and Housing